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## Office of Communications News Release

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### **National Park Service Emphasizes Common Sense Thinking and Practical Advice for Ways to Best Experience Inaugural Events while enjoying Inaugural Interpretive and Educational Offerings**

**Washington, D.C.** – With possible record crowds expected to show up on the National Mall and along Pennsylvania Avenue National Historic Site, the National Park Service (NPS) seeks to provide suggestions for how to best experience the 44<sup>th</sup> Presidential Inaugural events.

Among the determinants of what participants will remember of their Inaugural experience will be the weather. The NPS strongly urges everyone who intends to participate in the Inaugural events to pay close attention to the weather forecast, especially 24- to- 36 hours before the event. January weather in Washington could easily include snow, freezing rain, drizzle, ice or a combination of all of these forms of precipitation. Dressing appropriately based on the weather forecast will help ensure a positive experience.

NPS ranger staffs from 15 national parks in the Greater Washington area have created presidentially- themed programs and events for all visitors before, during and after the Inauguration. Many locations, including the White House Visitor Center's Inaugural Junior Ranger program (except on January 20) and the National Mall & Memorial Parks roving rangers will offer educational programs for children and adults.

The NPS also suggests the following:

- Dress in layers. This means wearing multiple layers of clothing that can either be removed or added depending on what weather and what temperatures are encountered. It should be expected the temperature—apart from any precipitation—will vary, possibly considerably, from early morning to mid- afternoon to early evening. Walking great distances generates body heat and perspiration, and anyone walking a good distance will become warm, at least temporarily. However, upon arriving at the location where the visitor will stand to view the Inaugural activities for a number of hours, the person may become chilled. Wearing multiple layers of clothing, some of which may be removed temporarily to allow for cooling, affords all visitors the ability to self- regulate their body temperature and may reduce the possibility of catching a cold or other illness.
- Wear waterproof footwear; leave the open- toed high heels and flip- flops at home! It is a virtual certainty that visitors will be on their feet for many hours on Inauguration Day  
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and will walk distances to arrive at their viewing location. What visitors wear on their feet—especially if it is rainy, snowy or cold—will quickly determine the type of experience they will have. If your feet are wet, cold or both, a miserable experience will likely ensue. While some visitors may want to “dress to impress,” spending multiple hours outdoors in potentially wet or snowy conditions will require wearing waterproof boots and socks which breathe that will allow anyone’s feet to remain dry all day.

- Reality check: Walking is highly likely. The NPS asks all visitors to ask themselves **before** coming to the Inaugural events whether they, and others with, them have the physical stamina to walk good distances from home to the Inaugural events, to stand for multiple hours in what could be a small, confined and possibly wet and cold space, and to then walk home. The NPS also asks all visitors to think first about how many personal items are really needed, as the NPS expects all personal items brought to the National Mall or to Pennsylvania Avenue National Historic Site to be brought back home with the person who brought the item. The concept of “less is more” applies.

While the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) is planning to run eight- car Metrorail trains all day beginning at 4:00 a.m. and express Metrobuses on key bus routes, “Metro” has said it expects to be running at “crush capacity” all day. Chances are great that not all visitors wishing to ride Metrorail or Metrobus will be accommodated in the timeframe they hope for. Thus, walking to and from all events may be a reality for many visitors.

NOTE: The NPS suggests non- ticket holding visitors make their decision ahead of time which location they will attempt to access for Inauguration Day. With large crowds expected, it will be virtually impossible to move between the swearing in along the National Mall to the parade route on Pennsylvania Avenue National Historic Site on Inauguration Day.

- Do not forget prescriptions and medications. Bring enough prescription medication, especially if any visitor’s prescription requires taking the medication every four to six hours. While the NPS will have First Aid stations at various locations along the National Mall and Pennsylvania Avenue National Historic Site, visitors should not assume these temporary First Aid stations will have supplies of any specific medication ready to be handed out to visitors.
- Children and Identification. The NPS recommends all parents who intend to bring their children to the Inaugural events make certain all children have information on the child that identifies the child, including methods for a missing or separated child to be reconnected quickly with a parent. It is recommended the child have information on their person which a police officer can read containing both the child and the parent’s names, cell phone and home phone numbers and a home address. It is further recommended any parent speak to and instruct their child as to whom the child should speak if the child were to become separated from the parent.
- Bicycling and Bicycle Valets. Biking to and from the Inaugural events may be one of the easier ways to get to and from the Inaugural events. In partnership with the Washington Area Bicyclists Association (WABA) and the NPS, two bike valets—one at the Jefferson Memorial’s parking lot and the other located in downtown Washington at 16<sup>th</sup> and K

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- Streets, NW—will operate on Inauguration Day from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. A bike owner simply leaves his or her bike at either location, receives a key that identifies their bike and presents the key to the valet volunteers when the owner returns to the valet to claim his or her bike. Visit [www.waba.org](http://www.waba.org) for more information.
- Food Availability vs. Bringing food. The NPS' concessioner, Guest Services, Inc., will provide temporary food "kiosks" at various locations on the National Mall and along Pennsylvania Avenue National Historic Site. Visitors may bring water and prepared sandwiches, but are prohibited from grilling or cooking anywhere at either location.
- Security checks. All visitors to the National Mall and to Pennsylvania Avenue National Historic Site should expect some form or level of security check. The U.S. Park Police have announced they will have as many as 1,000 police officers on duty between these two locations.
- Parade Route. A complete list of prohibited items is listed on the United States Secret Service Inaugural website at [http://www.secretservice.gov/presidential\\_inaugural.shtml](http://www.secretservice.gov/presidential_inaugural.shtml)
- Prohibited items in the general viewing area of the National Mall west of 4<sup>th</sup> Street. Prohibited items include, but are not limited to: firearms and ammunition (either real or simulated), explosives of any kind (including fireworks), Laser pointers, alcoholic beverages, or other items that may pose a reasonable threat to the security of the event.

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